



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE

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January 6, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Donald L. Wolfe
Interim Director of Public Works

STATUS REPORT ON SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS AND AB 939 COMPLIANCE-SB1066 TIME EXTENSION

The following provides a status of the Solid Waste Collection System Recommendations and the County's progress in complying with the requirements of the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), as amended, and the SB 1066 Time Extension approved by the California Integrated Waste Management Board. AB 939 requires each jurisdiction in California to divert 50 percent, compared to 1990 figures, of solid waste from disposal at landfills and/or transformation (i.e., incineration) facilities by 2000 and thereafter.

In 2002, we informed your Board of the Waste Board's determination that the County unincorporated areas did not achieve the 50 percent waste diversion goal. Based on the State's Disposal Reporting System, the County's diversion rate was calculated at 30 percent for the year 2000. However, we believe the County achieved a 56 percent diversion rate based on our internal studies, and we continue to express concern to the Waste Board that the system is inaccurate and unreliable, causing many jurisdictions' diversion rates to fluctuate wildly from year to year. In July 1999, your Board adopted a series of recommendations which, among other things, recommended that the State make specific improvements to the system and to place more emphasis on diversion program implementation and not on strict mathematical compliance.

In October 2002, the Waste Board granted a two-year Time Extension (expiring on December 31, 2004) to the County to achieve the 50 percent goal. The Time Extension required the County to enhance its waste diversion programs including adopting a construction and demolition (C&D) debris recycling ordinance, the phased implementation of a franchise system of waste collection, establishing the Lennox

Garbage Disposal District (GDD), gradually implementing automated trash collection in all unincorporated County areas, and implementing measures to improve accuracy of the disposal tonnages reported at the Puente Hills and Sunshine Canyon Landfills, as well as at other solid waste facilities, as their land use permits are granted or renewed.

We have moved aggressively towards implementing the required programs. Since August 2003, the new Lennox GDD has been fully operational and providing automated waste collection and recycling services to its residents and businesses. We have also implemented automated waste collection services in the Belvedere and Malibu GDDs, and we are in the process of preparing a new contract for automated collection in the Athens GDD when the current contract expires on June 30, 2005. We have incorporated waste origin verification requirements in the land use permit for the Puente Hills Landfill and anticipate incorporating similar requirements in upcoming permit revisions for the Sunshine Canyon Landfill and the Athens Materials Recovery Facility.

Recently, your Board also adopted an Ordinance that authorizes the establishment of franchises in the unincorporated areas. However, implementation of the franchise system is pending County Counsel's review and approval of a model franchise agreement. Upon approval and subsequent discussions with the waste hauling industry working group, we will be conducting community meetings, in coordination with each Board office, to solicit input on the services desired by each community. Based on this input, each franchise agreement will be modified and tailored to meet the needs of each community and will be brought before your Board for approval.

On November 16, 2004, Public Works held a public information meeting for stakeholders regarding the proposed C&D Debris Recycling Ordinance. The Ordinance will require the recycling of C&D debris by private projects in the County's unincorporated areas. On January 4, 2005, your Board approved the proposed C&D Debris Recycling Ordinance along with a proposed contract to educate permittees in complying with the County's proposed C&D recycling requirements.

Despite our expanded efforts, the County's diversion rate, using data from the State's System, has dropped to 17 percent for 2002, and we estimate that the rate may have dropped further in 2003. In anticipation of the expiration of the Time Extension, on September 23, 2004, Public Works met with Waste Board staff to inform them of our progress in carrying out the Time Extension. Waste Board staff recognized the difficult and special circumstances the County is facing regarding the implementation of these requirements and, while they cannot commit Waste Board approval, they were optimistic that another one-year Time Extension may be granted provided the County shows progress in implementing the elements of the Time Extension, including the C&D

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Recycling Ordinance and implementation of the franchise project by early 2005. Public Works is also discussing with the appropriate Board offices staff possible options for the implementation of automated waste collected services in the Firestone and Walnut Park GDDs one year ahead of schedule, beginning in July 2005.

Public Works will be applying for a second Time Extension when submitting the Annual Report (due in March 2005) and it is anticipated that the Waste Board will consider approval of the Time Extension by summer 2005. In the meantime, we will continue to implement the programs required by the first Time Extension and provide your Board with the quarterly status report.

In a related matter, on October 5, 2004, and November 30, 2004, the Waste Board held the first of a series of workshops to solicit stakeholder input on revamping the State's waste diversion compliance system. A primary topic of discussion is the possibility of changing the system to a program-based system to replace the current system based on detailed mathematical accounting. Pursuant to the recommendations approved by your Board in July 1999, Public Works will continue to participate and monitor the Waste Board's actions in this area to ensure a more reasonable and cost-effective way for measuring waste diversion.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me or your staff may contact Shari Afshari, Assistant Deputy Director, at (626) 458-3500, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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cc: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel
Executive Office